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ABSTRACT

This technical and vocational education (TVE) profile on Australia is one in a series of profiles of UNESCO member countries. It is intended to be a handy reference on TVE systems, staff development, technical cooperation, and information networking. Chapter 1 describes the demography, government, and economy of Australia. Chapter 2 provides information on its educational systems. Chapter 3 deals specifically with TVE. It lists addresses of responsible authorities for states/territories, summarizes statistics, and describes a typical vocational education progression. Chapter 4 summarizes results of a client opinion survey. Chapter 5 sets forth the training reform agenda. Chapter 6 provides descriptions of relevant major national organizations. Publications that provide up-to-date information are listed in a final chapter. Some of the highlights are as follows: (1) states/territories carry most of the responsibility for primary and secondary education and tertiary vocational education, whereas universities are almost entirely funded by the Commonwealth; (2) technical and further education (TAFE) is increasingly being regarded as an equivalent alternative to university; (3) a survey of 25,000 students showed extremely high satisfaction with TAFE, lecturers, and equity goals; and (4) the national training reform agenda has five elements--competency-based training, national recognition arrangements, an open training market, a new entry-level training system, and equity provision. (YLB)

ED 399 367

NATIONAL PROFILES IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Australia

UNEVOC
International Project on Technical and Vocational Education

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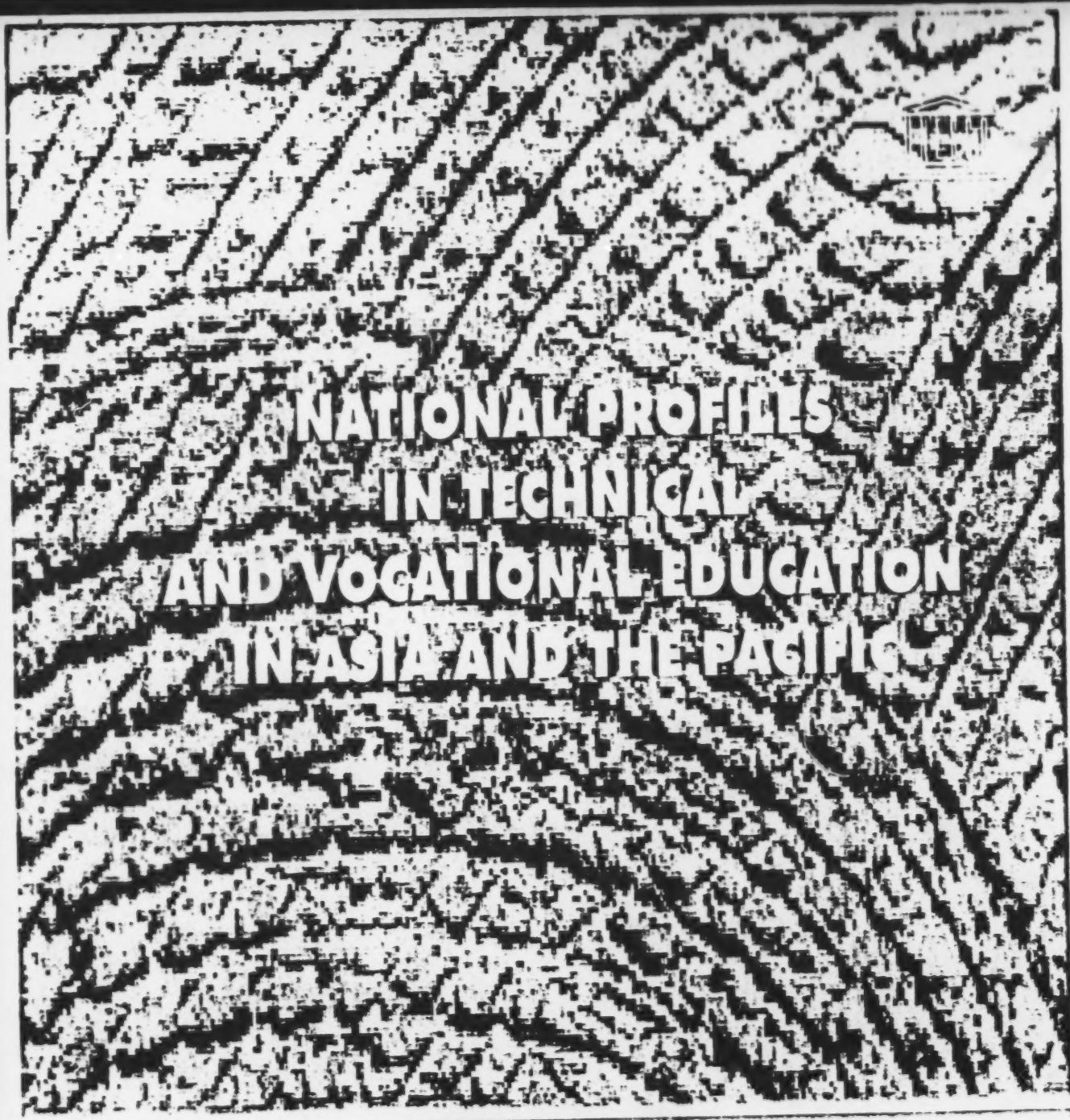

Australia

UNESCO PRINCIPAL REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, BANGKOK, 1995

This volume is one of a series of member country profiles on Technical and Vocational Education of the following member countries:

AFGHANISTAN
AUSTRALIA
BANGLADESH
BHUTAN
CHINA
FIJI
INDIA
INDONESIA
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
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FOREWORD

Technical and vocational education has always been an important component of UNESCO's consecutive Medium Term Plans. The basic objective of this programme is to support the efforts of Member States to link education systems more closely to the world of work and to promote the expansion and improvement of technical and vocational education in the light of changing employment needs.

The Colombo Plan Staff College for Technician Education (CPSC) also dedicates itself primarily to enhancing the growth and development of the technician education systems in its member countries which are located in the Asia and Pacific region. Its programmes, projects and activities are geared to provide the needed impetus for the professional development of senior level personnel involved in technician education development efforts.

UNESCO has launched an International Project on Technical and Vocational Education (UNEVOC) as of 1992 in co-operation with the Government of Germany, ILO, FAO, UNDP and NGOs interested in the reform of technical and vocational education. This project focuses on exchanging information, research and experiences on policy and programme issues in technical and vocational through a network of co-operating institutions.

In a spirit of co-operation between UNESCO and CPSC, under UNEVOC, an attempt is being made to compile and publish studies on the development of technical and vocational education in Member States in the form of TVE profiles of 21 countries. It is hoped that this series will serve as a handy reference information on TVE systems, staff development, technical co-operation and information networking. These studies have been possible because of the full co-operation to UNESCO PROAP and CPSC by all concerned in the Member States.

The opinion expressed in this study are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of UNESCO and CPSC in this regard. This profile on Australia was prepared by Dr. William C. Hall, Executive Director of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), Australia.

C.K. Basu
Director, CPSC

Victor Ordonez
Director, UNESCO PROAP

THE COUNTRY

Australia's population is about 17.5 million people. The area of the country is about eight million square kilometres (equivalent to the USA, excluding Alaska). The climate is tropical in the north and temperate in the South.

About 2% of the population is Aborigine; and about 22% of the population was born overseas. Australians are mostly Christian (73%) but with a large number of other religions, the highest proportion being Jews, Buddhists and Muslims.

The country's official language is English. The country relies heavily on its primary industries (especially agriculture and mining), but with manufacturing and service industries also being important, and with tourism growing rapidly.

Since 1901 Australia has had a federal system of government. The Commonwealth of Australia consists of

States :	New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania
Territories:	Australian Capital Territory Northern Territory.

Australia enjoys good relations with its Asian/Pacific neighbours and is a major aid donor to regional developing countries. This aid includes support for technical and vocational education.

The Commonwealth Government is situated in Canberra (Australian Capital Territory). It is a bicameral system of government which provides for a lower house (the House of Representatives) to be elected on the basis of one member per electorate; and an upper house (the Senate) which represents State/Territory views.

All States and Territories have their own governments. The third tier of government is at the local level. Australia is a highly stable, democratic country, which regards itself as a member of the Asian/Pacific region.

The population distribution is shown in the following table.

Urban-Rural Distribution of Persons at the 1986 Census

State/Territory	Rural	Urban
Australian Capital Territory	0.9%	99.1%
New South Wales	12.0%	87.9%
Northern Territory	27.7%	71.7%
Queensland	21.0%	78.9%
South Australia	15.3%	84.6%
Tasmania	25.4%	74.5%
Victoria	12.5%	87.4%
Western Australia	15.0%	84.7%
AUSTRALIA	14.5%	85.4%

Please note: Urban and rural proportions do not add up to 100 per cent as the proportion of migratory population is not included.

Source: Table 6.2 urban-rural distribution of persons, page 117, ABS Year Book Australia 1994.

The average family size is 3.2.

Australia is a modern, mixed economy which has provided for its citizens a high standard of living and political freedom. The literacy rate is high, although there are some work-place literacy problems which are being solved by adult education literacy courses.

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EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

Australia spends about 5 per cent of its GDP on education (and about 2.3% on defence).

Education is a State/Territory responsibility. However, although the Commonwealth has no legal powers relating to education, it may make grants to the States/Territories under agreed conditions. This provision has been used extensively for the past 50 years, and has had the practical effect of giving the Commonwealth considerable influence on educational matters.

Presently, States/Territories carry most of the responsibility for primary and secondary education, and for (tertiary) vocational education (commonly known as TAFE - technical and further education) recurrent funding. The universities are almost entirely funded by the Commonwealth.

Until recently, full secondary education followed the completion of Year 12. However, Year 13 is being introduced, mainly for students who have not achieved their Year 12 goals.

The following tables provide information on primary and secondary school enrolments.

Number of Full-Time Primary Students in all Schools by Sex, Australia, 1986-1992

Year	Number of Females	% Females of the total	Number of Males	% Males of the total	Total
1986	822,995	48.55	872,022	51.45	1,695,017 (a)
1987	821,780	48.58	869,685	51.42	1,691,465 (a)
1988	830,326	48.60	878,123	51.40	1,708,449 (a)
1989	845,122	48.61	893,303	51.39	1,738,425 (a)
1990	857,454	48.62	906,040	51.38	1,763,494
1991	868,446	48.61	918,083	51.39	1,786,529
1992	877,777	48.65	926,593	51.35	1,804,370

a) These totals exclude the special schools not identifiable as primary or secondary. As from 1990 students attending special schools have not been identified separately and have been allocated to either primary or secondary level of education.

Source: Table 6: Number of Full-time Students by Category of School (and Non-Government Affiliation) by Level/Year of Education, Australia 1986-1992. Australia Bureau of Statistics , Schools Australia 1986-1992.

Number of full-time secondary students in all schools by sex, Australia, 1986-1992.

Year	Number of Females	% Females of the total	Number of Males	% Males of the total	Total
1986	640,834	49.55	652,390	50.45	1,293,224 (a)
1987	648,275	49.90	655,128	50.43	1,299,039 (a)
1988	645,058	49.63	654,617	50.37	1,299,675 (a)
1989	637,025	49.76	643,174	50.24	1,280,199 (a)
1990	635,691	49.73	642,472	50.27	1,278,163
1991	638,176	49.52	650,432	50.48	1,288,608
1992	639,470	49.40	655,126	50.60	1,294,596

(a) These totals exclude the special schools not identifiable as primary or secondary.. As from 1990 students attending special schools have not been identified separately and have been allocated to either primary or secondary level of education.

Source: Table 6: Number of Full-Time Students by Category of School (and Non-Government Affiliation) by Level/Year of Education, Australia 1986-1992. Australia Bureau of Statistics , Schools Australia 1986-1992.

The pupil/teacher ratios are as follows:

Student/teaching staff (full-time equivalent) ratios by level of education in all schools, Australia, 1990-1992

Year	Primary	Secondary	Total
1990	18.4	12.4	15.3
1991	18.5	12.5	15.4
1992	18.4	12.4	15.3

Source: Table 18 (page 58) Student/Teaching Staff (FTE) Ratios by Level of Education:Category of School (and Non-Government Affiliation), 1990-1992.

The number of commencing students by education sector are shown below.

The number of commencing students by school level, Australia, 1986-1992

Year	Primary school	Secondary school	TAFE	Higher education	Adult education
1986	236,011	256,037	709,960	148,677	489,580
1987	243,925	247,811	759,806	153,800	501,767
1988	252,542	241,887	766,782	168,916	523,658
1989	257,579	239,220	766,757	181,102	582,864
1990	257,077	237,375	743,368	201,440	499,533
1991	258,014	237,656	784,202	217,940	575,565
1992	257,560	238,822	815,708	210,599	686,336

The primary and secondary school figures for 1986 to 1989 excludes the students in special schools not identifiable as primary or secondary.

Source: Primary/Secondary: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Schools Australia 1990, 1991 and 1992.
TAFE/Adult Education: Selected TAFE Statistics 1992 (unpublished data).
Tertiary Education: Selected Higher Education Statistics 1991-1992.

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TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

In the past, high schools have emphasized academic subjects for university entrance. This is now changing, so that TAFE is increasingly being regarded as an (equivalent) alternative to university. Also, the barriers between general education and vocational education at every level of education are being broken down.

Technical and vocational education are the responsibility of State/Territory governments.

The administrative structures of State/Territory technical and vocational education change frequently but, at the time of writing, the responsible authorities are shown below.

NSW TAFE Commission
PO Box 8888
St. Leonards New South Wales 2065

Dept. of Employment, Vocational Education & Training
151 Royal Street
East Perth Western Australia 6004

Canberra Institute of Technology
GPO Box 826
Canberra City Australian Capital Territory 2601

Dept. of Employment, Training & Further Education
GPO Box 2352
Adelaide South Australia 5001

Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training
GPO Box 587
Hobart Tasmania 7001.

Office of Training & Further Education
PO Box 266D
Melbourne Victoria 3001

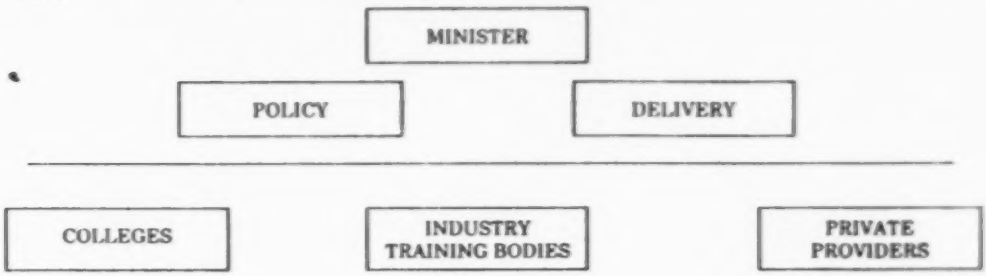
Post Secondary Education and Training
Department of Education
GPO Box 4821
Darwin Northern Territory 0801

Department of Employment, Vocational Education,
Training and Industrial Relations (DEVETIR)
GPO Box 69
Brisbane, Queensland 4001

The address of the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training is:

GPO Box 9880
Canberra Australian Capital Territory 2601.

A general State/Territory administrative model is emerging and it looks like this:



Overall technical and vocational education (TAFE) statistics for the three years 1990-1992 as summarized in the following table.

	1992	1991	1990
Number of Institutions	704	884	835
Number of Course Enrolments	1,935,780	1,824,536	1,752,021
Number of Annual Student Contact Hours	259,286,000	235,811,030	212,730,000
Estimated Number of Students	1,743,943	1,554,098	1,489,326
Estimated Number of Female Students	987,450	694,922	655,856
Estimated Number of Male Students	742,973	631,874	618,529
Estimated Number of Full-time Students	126,398	99,387	83,911
Estimated Number of Part-time Students	1,617,545	1,454,711	1,405,415
Estimated Number of Commencing Students	1,476,750	1,345,137	1,230,030
Estimated Number of Students in each Field of Study			
1. Land and Marine Resources, Animal Husbandry	76,753	56,194	50,095
2. Architecture, Building	86,460	85,699	83,704
3. Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	244,515	236,831	163,089
4. Business, Administration, Econ	308,912	285,628	250,982
5. Education	15,165	14,372	9,702
6. Engineering, Surveying	188,148	192,851	184,925
7. Health, Community Services	155,496	120,894	63,726
8. Law, Legal Studies	7,689	5,333	3,681
9. Science	68,672	66,928	134,629
10. Veterinary Science, Animal Care	1,914	1,486	1,373
11 Services, Hospitality, Transportation	137,368	136,190	118,323
12 TAFE Multi-Field Education	537,980	228,154	285,037
Staff			
Number of Full-time Teaching Staff	18,302	17,727	17,890
Total Teaching Hours of all Staff	16,976,645	15,788,298	15,158,782
Total Duty Hours of all Staff	29,991,567	29,360,899	28,948,661
Full-time Equivalent Non-teaching Staff	15,433.98	15,322.42	14,042.41

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A typical vocational education progression would run along the following lines. (The reference is to "TAFE College". However, college names are changing, for example, to institutes of vocational education).

While still in high school, the student may follow some courses or observe some experiences run in connection with a TAFE college or industry, which may be called `work experience' or similar.

After leaving high school, the student may undertake a full time course in a TAFE college labelled `pre-vocational' which will concentrate upon a particular group of related occupations within the same industry, e.g. metal trades, wood trades or similar. Successful completion in such a course may give advanced standing in a subsequent appropriate course.

While still in high school or a TAFE college the student may undertake a pre-apprentice course similar to the above, but with a more focused intention to lead into an apprenticeship.

In a TAFE college, an `introductory' course may be taken which is designed to equip an individual with a basic knowledge and skills to enable him or her to embark upon a formal trades course, e.g. `Introduction to electronics for women'.

The whole range of vocational courses covering both the traditional crafts, the licensed occupations (e.g. real estate salesperson) and the newer occupations - computer operator, computer programmer, etc., are on offer. These courses lead to a Certificate or Advanced Certificate.

Advanced technical education builds upon the courses already covered and leads to a higher level of skill, or greater knowledge in depth or in breadth, or provides training in supervisory or management processes in the same occupational area of skill. Other courses may facilitate the transfer from one occupation to another.

Technical and vocational education is taught in modern, well equipped colleges by well qualified and experienced teachers. Teacher numbers are shown below.

The estimated number of full-time equivalent (FTE) TAFE teachers by type of appointment, Australia, 1986-1992

Year	Number of full-time teachers	Number of part-time teachers (FTE)	Total number of FTE teachers.
1986	17,956	4,889	22,845
1987	17,775	4,787	22,562
1988	17,902	4,695	22,597
1989	18,133	4,676	22,809
1990	17,890	4,999	22,889
1991	17,727	5,409	23,136
1992	18,302	5,948	24,250

Source: Duty Hours ('000') of Teaching Staff and Full-time Teaching Numbers by Type of Appointment and State, Australia. Selected TAFE Statistics, 1986-1992.

It is difficult to calculate the number of part-time teachers in any year because this varies from year to year and changes as State policy changes. Therefore the number of part-time teachers is represented as full-time equivalent staff.

CLIENT OPINIONS

The Committee on TAFE and Training Statistics (COTTS) conducted a national client satisfaction survey to determine what students thought of TAFE. Over 25,000 questionnaires were analyzed. 67.1% of TAFE students were in paid work. The results show, quite unambiguously, that there is extremely high satisfaction with TAFE.

A five-point scale was used for most questions (ranging from `very good' to `very poor'). Only 4.4% of students rated the ability of TAFE lecturers to relate to students as `poor' or `very poor'. 74.6% rated the lecturers `very good' or `good'.

Similar results were obtained for the amount of contact with the lecturer. 88.6% of students rated their lecturer's knowledge of course content as `very good' or `good'. Teaching skills also rated very highly.

The course content, length, balance of theory and practice, lesson notes, assessments, equipment and teaching rooms were all highly rated. Only 6.6% were dissatisfied with the time and day on which classes were offered.

Although certainly not poor, the least high responses were for student services. Only 36.1% thought information provided about employment was `good' or `very good'. 86.5% thought that the cost of their course was reasonable.

The reasons for doing their courses are interesting. 26% did the course to get a job; 12% to get a better job or promotion; 16% for additional skills; and 12% as a requirement for their present job. 12% did their course to start a new career; 6% to get into another course; 15% for personal development and 5% for interest.

The survey showed that TAFE is achieving its equity aims. 7.8% of students were sole supporting parents (10.2% females and 5.1% males). 13% of all students did not have English as their first language; 2.8% were physically disabled; and 1.4% were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent.

TRAINING REFORM AGENDA

Vocational education is crucial to Australia becoming a more productive and competitive country. The adoption by the Federal, State and Territory ministers of a training reform agenda has indicated a firm commitment by government to the improvement of vocational education.

There are five basic elements in the training reform agenda:

- competency-based training
- national recognition arrangements
- an open training market
- a new entry-level training system
- equity provision.

To implement this agenda, vocational education has to meet the following challenges:

- it must support industry restructuring by providing suitable training on- and off-the-job;
- it must develop and implement competency-based training and assessment;
- it must create new approaches to delivery in vocational education;
- it must develop and implement a new credentials framework and related accreditation systems;
- it must form new relationships with schools, universities, training organizations, private providers and employers.

RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS

A brief description of relevant major national organizations now follows.

- **Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET/Ministerial Council)**

  The Training Reform Agenda was substantially adopted by Special Ministerial Conferences in April 1989 and November 1990. The second agreed to establish a new council of Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET). The new ANTA is to report to a ministerial council that is substantially the same as MOVEET.

- **Australian National Training Authority (ANTA)**

  The Australian National Training Authority was established to implement an agreement which came into effect on 1 January 1994. ANTA consists of five people plus a secretariat of about 100 people to run the authority and report to the Ministerial Council.

  ANTA is to achieve national consistency in the delivery of vocational education through the development of agreed `national goals, objectives and priorities', `national strategic plans', `firm targets and priorities', coordinated funding arrangements, and `profiles' for vocational education and training at national level. State and Territory authorities will advise ANTA on State and Territory `profiles'.

  Industry will participate through membership of ANTA and through the Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) network. National ITABs will advise ANTA on national `profiles', and State and Territory ITABs will be considered and adopted by the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers in the Ministerial Council.

- **National TAFE Chief Executives' Committee (NTCC)**

  The National TAFE Chief Executives' Committee (NTCC) consists of the technical and vocational education chief executive officers. It replaced the Australian Conference of TAFE Directors (ACTD).

- **Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET)**

  The Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) was established in 1987 to integrate the constituent elements reflected in its name more effectively than they had been under preceding administrative arrangements. With the establishment of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), the Vocational Education and Training Division of DEET, which has played a major role in the development and promotion of the training reform agenda, has been reduced in size.

- **National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET)**

  The National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) was established to advise the federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, replacing the former Commonwealth Schools Commission, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, and the Australian Research Grants Committee. NBEET has one Council with technical and vocational education responsibility: the Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC).

- **National Training Board (NTB)**

  The two special ministerial conferences in April 1989 and November 1990 agreed to establish a National Training Board as a company owned jointly by the Commonwealth, States and Territories. The NTB promulgates national competency standards which have been developed by approved competency standards bodies (CSBs) which are representative of relevant industry interests. (Some CSBs are Industry Training Advisory Bodies: see below.)

  The NTB is supported by a memorandum of understanding in which all States and Territories agreed to deliver vocational education that is nationally consistent with NTB approved vocational competency standards. Vocational competency standards are related to the eight-level Australian Standards Framework, which has been developed by the NTB. Vocational competencies are distinct from, and underpinned by generic key areas of competency.

- **National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER)**

  The National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER) used to be called the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development Ltd. The TAFE National Centre was established in 1982 as a company owned jointly by the Commonwealth, States and Territories to undertake research on TAFE.

  In 1992, the name and role were changed to a more inclusive one of dealing with vocational education, encompassing community and private providers and vocational education and industry training, as well as State and Territory TAFE.

  The NCVER undertakes and funds research on vocational education, provides a clearing-house and database service on vocational education research throughout the Asian-Pacific area, analyses vocational education statistics for the Commonwealth, States and Territories, and disseminates information on vocational education.

- **Australian Committee on Training Curriculum (ACTRAC)**

  The Australian Committee on Training Curriculum (ACTRAC) has developed from the former Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum (ACTC), which in turn evolved from the former Curriculum Projects Steering Group. ACTRAC has a broader, inclusive brief, to develop curriculum for private and industry providers, not just TAFE. It reports to ANTA.

- **Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs)**

  Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) is the general term for bodies variously called committees, boards and councils in the federal network and the different States and Territories. They form the main link between industry and the providers of technical and vocational education.

- **National Framework for Recognition of Training (NFROT)**

  NFROT provides for national recognition of providers, accreditation of courses, and recognition of credentials attained.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications which will help you to keep informed about Australian technical and vocational education include the following produced by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

- Australian Training Review
- Selected TAFE Statistics
- Quarterly Apprenticeship Statistics
- Vocational Education and Training Database.

All State/Territory technical and vocational education authorities produce comprehensive handbooks which describe courses which are offered. Authorities' addresses are given on page 6.

The Australian Government Publishing Service (AGPS) regularly publishes reports on different aspects of technical and vocational education. Their address is:

Mail Order Sales
GPO Box 84
Canberra Australian Capital Territory 2601.